

Appendix – Post External Focus Group Meeting e-mail Comments

Email Comments from some external constituents:

- Tell us a little about how you feel your industry views us as a program and how we do business.
I believe that the outlook is favorable as long as one follows the rules, everyone has had some discussion in one form with the Department on certain issues and those issues when resolved in a proper and understanding way, there tends not to be a problem. As far as the landfill sighting process I have nothing but good to say, the department has been very helpful.
- What do you believe should be the highest priority of the Waste Management Program in the near term and years to come?
Looking for alternative ways to dispose or recycle material. I believe that especially in the C&D waste, that there is much that can be recycled or reused. As a private we need the markets and some leeway to experiment with the processes.
- What kind of changes would make this program be perceived as more progressive and innovative?
Public and private awareness or education of processes and programs available.
- What does it mean for a regulatory program to be adaptable?
That if there is a need, and the individual is conducting his business correctly, that certain regulations may be looked at. For instance I do not understand why one cannot expand an intermediate CD facility, or be closer that 1320. The costs that are associated with the larger facilities are astronomical for a small corporation and thus far only the large companies can afford to look at them. With the leachate collection systems in the intermediate sites, and the clay liner, I do believe the adequate precautions have been taken to protect the environment and groundwater.
- Help us put into perspective why letting go of some oversight responsibilities and empowering our stakeholders is good for the program and good for WI.
With the liability issues for the landfills I do not believe that any company wants to deal with environmental cleanup issues, therefore following the proper procedures in disposal, construction and oversight. I don't believe it is the companies that have the sites that look to blatantly disregard policy. As owners and operators of sites it is up to us to keep the calm within our community.
- Tell us a little about political reality that we may not see.
N/A
- What are the business need and technology advances that you believe we should be aware of in issuing solid and hazardous waste approvals and licenses?
- What business needs are currently not met by our program or in our approvals and permitting?
- What are the current costs to you in the approval, permitting, licensing we do? What are acceptable costs?

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With the sighting process for CD waste I don't have a problem with the current 7000.00 review fee.

- What are we doing well in the program?
The ability to answer questions and be supportive when it comes to situations where the public may not always understand what is happening at a site or new location.
- How will you judge if we are successful?
If the needs of the general public are met at a reasonable cost. And private and public corporations are kept on an even playing field.
- What do you consider a successful program?
One that can adapt to an ever-changing world, and adapt quickly.
- What do you think others (staff, environmental groups, and local government) will consider a successful program?
This is a very hard question it would depend upon what side of the fence your on, and how you perceive needs. You can be understanding of others needs or you can take a stance NIMBY no matter what the costs are to businesses and individuals.
- What has been your experience in other states in obtaining solid and hazardous waste permits, approvals, or licenses?
- If you could change 3 things about how the Waste Management program operates what would they be?
To have consistency throughout the department.
- Do you think changes will actually be made to the program that will help businesses? Why? Why not?
It is hard to tell if the changes with cutbacks and program changes will help or hinder, as long as questions can be answered timely and actions are taken I do not see any problems.
- What experiences have you had with the waste program – our regulatory processes and rule making?
Rule making I have not had any input. The regulatory process and waste program I have had good experiences with them.
- What are we doing well – why is it successful and how could we build on these successes in our other work?
The department has done well with answering questions on regulatory and environmental concerns and siting concerns. The department needs to keep the communication channels open.
- What are the main issues that we should be aware of in reviewing issuing solid waste and hazardous waste approvals or in changing our approval process or rules?
Our first goal was a small site, now we are siting the intermediate site, I would like to see an option from the intermediate site to a larger industrial site, even if it means going through the siting process again.
- What changes or approach do you recommend we adopt to be better positioned to meet changing needs of industry, the environment and our public?

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- How do you compare our program and our regulatory process to other states your work with? Please provide specific examples.
- What types of activities have you had experience with the waste program in – landfills, solid waste facility approvals, composting, recycling
I have had dealings with all with the exception of composting.
- What of your experience was positive and where could we have done things better?
The department has always been helpful.
- Where do you see areas that changes could be made – consider items such as staffing, code/statutory, process, etc?
- What issues do you see affecting the waste industry and/or municipalities in the future that we should be anticipating?
- In your experience are there innovative approaches that you've seen utilized that could be expanded on and utilized more extensively throughout the state?
One area that I did cover earlier was recycling C&D, though tipping rates in Wisconsin is relatively low compared to other states. But you must take into consideration not looking at the gate rates but internal rates that corporations provide themselves, when it is \$46.00 at the gate certain account may only be charged \$20.00 per ton. This does have an impact on what and how you invest in your business. I have seen facilities in Minnesota and have had correspondence with companies out east, it can work, but from a small corporation aspect one has to be careful.

External Focus Group Questions Summary -- XXXXXXXXXXXX Responses July 2004

1. **Tell us a little about how you feel your industry views us as a program and how we do business.**

NA

2. **What do you believe should be the highest priority of the Waste Management Program in the near term and years to come?**

Focus on largest volume materials (C&D) and most toxic materials (mercury, computers, small "unrecyclable" batteries, cell phones, TV's, liquid waste...like household cleaners and solvents)

3. **What kind of changes would make this program be perceived as more progressive and innovative?**

Spend time setting up a specific program (or action) to deal with above mentioned items -- something that's not a "report". E.g. no need to collect more data, instead lead on a significant issue and spend communication money to get

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the new service/program out there and used. Think of the motto...actions always speak louder than words.

4. What does it mean for a regulatory program to be adaptable?

Not sure, but DNR needs to enforce poor performance and encourage better performance.

5. Help us put into perspective why letting go of some oversight responsibilities and empowering our stakeholders is good for the program and good for WI.

If you have to let go, I would only do it strategically. For example, do surprise enforcement field trips or target largest offenders... do not let go, but if you have to cut back – do it in a way that sets examples and reminds constituents that offenders will not get away with breaking the law. Again communication is very important.

6. Tell us a little about political reality that we may not see.

Don't worry so much about politics, rather focus on DNR core mission... protect the environment, and spend all your energy there. I realize that everything is political, but there are other groups that deal with politics and the DNR's is not supposed to be political (at least in the public eye). The DNR's customers are all of the people, plants, animals, water, soil and air that "live" in Wisconsin. Only the former can vote!

7. What are the business need and technology advances that you believe we should be aware of in issuing solid and hazardous waste approvals and licenses?

Not sure.

8. What business needs are currently not met by our program or in our approvals and permitting?

Not sure.

9. What are the current costs to you in the approval, permitting, licensing we do? What are acceptable costs?

Not sure.

10. What are we doing well in the program?

Getting input (I was part of a DNR process "Move to Zero Waste" a few years ago and thought that went well and that the DNR was very open to suggestions and picked a strong progressive mission statement. I also thought the recent Waste Study was communicated well. There were a lot of articles that got into the paper about it, highlighting how C&D is a large issue. It was good to get the report results out, instead of sitting on a shelf.

11. How will you judge if we are successful?

Again, actions speak louder than words. Find the worst situations and clean them up and use the examples to create more awareness of the issues of C&D and toxics. For example, is there a county that has a larger C&D issue because there are no markets for concrete and wood etc? Then help that county with grants or whatever, address the issue, and a few years later report on your success. We should also look at the C&D “clean fill” operations. My guess is that many of these sites have the potential to leach contaminants into our groundwater (as the lining rules are less strict) and we should be aware of the situation and mitigate it before some of them become contaminated sites. I’m aware that the materials that enter these sites are supposed to be “clean”, but an investigation before there is a problem is warranted. It was only 15 years ago we thought dumps in sand pits in rural Wisconsin were safe before we banned them. If there are counties with out clean sweep programs, help them start them up, so electronics and solvents etc are not entering our landfills.

12. What do you consider a successful program?

See above and in addition think forward -- with the aim toward prevention, rather than only reacting and responding. I’m not saying the department does not think forward (you are right now for example) but then act on specific action oriented programs and communicate the success. Sometimes it’s better to pick a few small narrowly defined projects that have a chance to be successful soon rather than try to do too much and not get anything specifically done well. (Again, maybe there are already good examples of these types of programs, if so, get the word out about your successes even if they’re small.)

13. What do you think others (staff, environmental groups, and local government) will consider a successful program?

Not sure, but I think most people like results (e.g. A cleaner environment, a cleaned up landfill, options to recycle hazardous materials, etc)

14. What has been your experience in other states in obtaining solid and hazardous waste permits, approvals, or licenses?

NA.

15. If you could change 3 things about how the Waste Management program operates what would they be?

See # 11. Basically pick two or three issues and two or three needy areas around the state and then give yourself a tight timeline to implement action that addresses those issues (C&D and toxics) and finally communicate the actions with the public (ads in the paper, information in post offices, articles in local papers) all along the way.

16. Do you think changes will actually be made to the program that will help businesses? Why? Why not?

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Whenever you improve the environment, you're helping business because WI's quality of life and long term "security" is better. NYT and Wall Street Journal have regularly reported that protecting the environment does not hurt business. If a business says it will not help, ask them very specifically why. For example, there is a myth that business taxes are very high in WI, even when recently the Capital Times reported that this is not so (it was a UW-Madison COWS study). It was a very good example, of how if you hear something over and over you start believing it.

17. What experiences have you had with the waste program – our regulatory processes and rule making?

I have read much of the Solid Waste and Recycling Rules as we help our clients with recycling issues and meeting the requirements of the law.

18. What are we doing well – why is it successful and how could we build on these successes in our other work?

It's great that we still have all of the recycling bans. In Addition see response to # 10.

19. What are the main issues that we should be aware of in reviewing issuing solid waste and hazardous waste approvals or in changing our approval process or rules?

Electronics (cell phones etc) may create a greater problem soon as some are already obsolete. Be prepared with a plan to deal with the many more hazardous electronics that will enter our landfills. E.g. maybe we should add a 15th item to our list of bans (Electronics... TV's, computers, cell phones etc.)

20. What changes or approach do you recommend we adopt to be better positioned to meet changing needs of industry, the environment and our public?

I think my other responses work here.

21. How do you compare our program and our regulatory process to other states your work with? Please provide specific examples.

We have a much better landfill ban system than other states and I think we should expand this... since we're good at it! See # 19 above.

22. What types of activities have you had experience with the waste program in – landfills, solid waste facility approvals, composting, recycling

I've done waste audits at transfer stations and have experience with recycling and construction and demolition waste.

23. What of your experience was positive and where could we have done things better?

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I was surprised at how well the WI residents are recycling (when I did my audit). It was a small study, however it was positive to see a rural community recycle so well. We should remind and thank our residents of all they do to improve the environment by recycling. In C&D I witness a lack of market outlets for materials such as concrete and wood.

24. Where do you see areas that changes could be made – consider items such as staffing, code/statutory, process, etc?

In general in the environmental movement (DNR included), we all need to improve our communications and messaging and spend time and money to market (creatively... not flyers that are not designed that no one will read) our information and actions -- the laws and resources. We tend to think people know the law and understand the issues, but I don't think this is the case and if folks are well informed they will be more likely to follow the law and protect our environment.

25. What issues do you see affecting the waste industry and/or municipalities in the future that we should be anticipating?

See electronics comments above. Also, the oil peak (when demand will exceed supply) between 2007-2015 will greatly affect hauling costs. We should think strategically and have a future network of recycling and landfill locations that make sense in an energy in-stable future. For example, the municipalities should be encouraged to maintain ownership of their landfills (if they were not already bought out). The more control the state and municipalities have of their own resources, the more options we will have in the future. I also feel that we will learn more and more about how recycling plastic is unhealthy for workers at recycling plants. I would not advocate increasing plastic recycling programs. I think it might be safer (from a health benefit) and wiser (from a transportation standpoint) to landfill some plastic rather than recycle it. Ideally we would create laws that limit or discourage plastic packaging, including plastic garbage bags.

26. In your experience are there innovative approaches that you've seen utilized that could be expanded on and utilized more extensively throughout the state?

Habitat Restore should be in every county. It's an excellent resource to reuse construction materials and it builds awareness of the larger scale C&D issue. Clean sweep programs are great and should be available in every county in WI (maybe it already is!).